

be required, a fundamental conceptual continuity would bind the silent period and new sound practices. Though it was a musical term, a kind of counterpoint had in fact already been central to the great Soviet silent productions. This was *montage*, which articulated rigorous formal devices by which revolutionary subject matter would be most effectively and meaningfully rendered.

Soviet film pioneer Lev Kuleshov proposed the key concept that came to underpin all montage theory: that all meaning in film comes from the juxtaposition of images, and not from the images themselves.²⁹ Kuleshov concluded that “we must look for the organizational basis of cinema, not within the confines of the filmed fragment, but in the way these fragments relate to one another.”³⁰ Though a great number of variations would be played on this theme, Kuleshov’s combinatory concept was the essential core, before and after sound; meaning is made in the juxtaposition of discrete film fragments.³¹

The contrapuntal possibilities of montage are suggested in the definition of the former term: “note against note.”³² This is as Kuleshov suggested; insight is gained through the juxtaposition of contrasting parts. It is significant that “counterpoint” was not the only dialectical simile, the only nonfilmic form that the Soviets found to be similar to montage. In his “The Cinematic Principle and the Ideogram,” written in 1929 (1949).³³ Sergei Eisenstein discusses how Japanese picture writing conveys meaning by the combination of images that would seem at first to be unrelated. Thus “the picture for water and the picture of an eye signifies ‘to weep’; the picture of an ear near the drawing of a door means ‘to listen,’” and so on. He later points out that meaning can become the product and not just the sum of the two separate parts; concepts agglomerate around the combination, leading to a multiplication of association and meaning.³⁴

In these examples we see how not only film fragments were combined, but also whole traditions and disciplines. Music and picture writing are two of the things that Eisenstein used both literally and figuratively to elaborate montage theory. They both utilize, in fact, telling juxtapositions, and the effects, metaphorically, are *like* those of cinematic montage.

Eisenstein’s term for these multiplying juxtapositions was “intellectual montage.” This was actually one of five types of mon-